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ABSTRACT

One college instructor's methods of incorporating global issues into advanced classes of English as a Second Language are described. The objectives are to enable students to identify, access, organize, interpret, and respond to information about world affairs in print and non-print forms from diverse sources, and to enable them further to analyze the stories for their separate messages. It is argued that while students may have varying amounts of background knowledge, the clustering of issues and provision of handouts allows for building background information within the class. The concepts of news recognition and news recall are discussed. Rationales for selecting videos are examined, and specific video segments (not included here) on a variety of topics from around the world are reviewed for their instructional value. Use of a checklist for evaluating video segments in the classroom is proposed, and types of issues (procedural, substantive, conceptual, values) students might address in discussing news segments are considered. Use of brainstorming as a classroom discussion technique is also examined, and lessons learned from teaching global issues are noted. Appended materials include a handout listing global issues for discussion and a list of questions to consider in selecting instructional materials. (MSE)

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Presenting Global Issues to Advanced Learners

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Presenting Global Issues to Advanced Learners

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INTRODUCTION

Hi, my name is Sam Vann, Thank you for coming to my talk this afternoon. Today I hope to share with you a little of what I discovered in a practical way about presenting Global Issues to advanced ESL students. I'd also like to give you an informal running commentary on a few of the video segments as a way to both discuss some of the textual and non-textual aspects of the class along with a few rationales for what I did.

Please remember that at the end there will be time for questions and answers. So would you jot down any ideas or questions you'd like to share and hold them until then.

One of my strongest rationales with my global issues class is that I want my students to look at news stories and other types of information, facts and figures, a little more objectively by promoting more active viewing and listening. I want to activate the reading and interpretation of the newscast transcripts as well.

In a single class, the English proficiency of even our advanced students can vary greatly. In some cases, this variation may lie, for one example, in an individual student's access or lack of access to the medium of TV, both in being able to find time to watch it and then being able to interpret it.

Because as news and information come at us all in increasingly huge quantities, my ability, as well as my students ability to understand what's going on in the global village will be and is severely tested.

The global village is the world viewed as a community in which distance and isolation have been dramatically reduced. Many of my students have come to Cornell for a piece of this global pie, to globalize themselves or make their newly acquired professional skills global or worldwide in scope or application.

Through my class, they can start to look behind the media curtain of newscast on CNN or other sources and begin to gain an understanding of the common problems faced by all nations. They gain a sharper appreciation of economic, social, political, and cultural differences.

I would like my students to be able to identify, access, organize, interpret and respond to textual and non-textual data from diverse sources.

I would also eventually like to see my advanced students be able to talk back to the newscasts, take the shows apart, and look at the individual news stories separately for their real messages,

In other words, read between the lines and see the news shows as an artfully constructed bundle of disjointed parts. All newscasts are constructed. All are used to convey the news producer's viewpoint and often that of the culture's.

Let's watch some video segments no before I make my comments on the contents and the process of selecting videos.

Unfortunately, what we commonly and loosely call language learning and language acquisition in an ESL class does not just really occur in listening to and working on various language tasks associated with isolated video segments from television. Its only a start, and a meager one at that.

Rather it takes place in the larger context of what language experiences occurred before and what is occurring now and possibly next week both in and outside of the classroom.

The global issues class is the platform from which I begin teaching advanced level students large amounts of related and sometimes unrelated information about global issue, but with the emphasis always on acquiring more English.

We all know that the key to effective networking or linking of subject matter/content is making information vivid and meaningful within its context. To be meaningful, we must link new information to something that is already familiar to the learner and the background knowledge they possess.

Now, some of my students already possess large stores of information about global issues, events, and other cultures and this is complemented by their strong English skills. They are the informationally rich, so to speak, and they get even richer, because of their strong English skills

Yet for other students, in many ways it almost doesn't matter what or how much of their background knowledge is there, because the global issues class and the clustering of topics, as you see in your handout, allows for the building of background information with the integration of other very serious ESL concerns they have.

Lets briefly consider two non-ESL terms that might be overlooked when dealing with video segments and the topics you choose: *news recognition* and *news recall*. This is recognition and recall as we already know it, but a little different.

By *news recognition*, I refer to a very fundamental sort of memory of the news, a student's simple acknowledgement, when presented with a basic description, video segment, or story topic, that he or she has read something about it. They know more about OJ for example, than I do.

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By *news recall*, I refer to a student's ability to call to mind and explain after an open-ended question, a few rudimentary details of a particular story.

In some students, we are talking about only the barest forms of student awareness and not necessarily a richly detailed or elaborate set of memories and ideas floating around.

Satisfactory recall of a news story means a student not only recognizes having come across that story somewhere in the news stream, it also means that he or she can successfully relate something about its content to me or fellow students and give something to the class momentum.

RATIONALES FOR CHOOSING VIDEOS

Let me continue briefly with my rationales for choosing the video segments and then do a a running commentary on several of the segments, as a means to show you my rationale for selecting them.

Generally speaking, there are many advantages and benefits for incorporating video into the classroom. I'm sure you know these.

First, if the video clip provides enough context, my students can leverage their background information to its utmost and resultingly understand much more than their linguistic knowledge alone would take them. With appropriate video input, students can try to build context for what is said.

Secondly, video facilitates memory, gives students a better framework for remembering, and provides me with many kinds of scenes, situations, and visual input which would be impossible for me to recreate in a classroom by myself.

And finally, video, as I have already mentioned, fits in with the way my students are accustomed to getting information. There is no doubt about the entertainment value.

VIDEO SEGMENTS GUIDE

Let me now say a few words about some specific video segments. You have the World View Segments Guide in you handout if you'd like to follow.

For example in Teens in Trouble, segments 1.22 and 1.23 ,

Although we are dealing with both teens and crime in North America, the implications are directed towards global crime which will definitely be a growth industry in many countries as they find themselves gripped by the same social forces that have long effected the United States.

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In Irian Jaya 3.43,

students reflect on environment and resources, but also that in preserving biodiversity, the vast variety of plant and animal species , could become increasingly important to human survival.

In a segment like Young Palestinian Brides 1.13 which is combined with 4.76 Israel: Women's rights as you saw in the earlier clip,

I chose the segment, because cultural differences or not, I found this issue made me incredibly angry as I watched. This segment was about men essentially selling and marrying of their 15 year old daughters. Students become aware that people and societies often have greatly varied perspectives.

In Tuk Tuk Power of Thailand 1.18,

students are not only addressing but re-thinking the issues of air pollution, alternative energy sources and global warming via the topic of future of global transportation.

In 3.42 UN Study on Rwanda and 4.64 United Nations,

despite technological advances, epidemics and mass starvation will continue to occur into the twenty-first century because of strained resources in some areas and politically motivated disruptions in others.

Continuing in the same vein,
IN 3.41 Zaire : Ebola Virus, and South Africa 3.54,

To my students, the problems of AIDS, ebola, dengue and other diseases is alarming and scary, to say the least. As my students also see in the combined video segments, Africa as a continent, is expected to continue to be politically unstable and may redivide along tribal or religious lines.

In segments like 1.7 Indian Culture: Joint Family, and 11.8 India: Gender Testing,

Eugenics may be becoming inevitable in India and elsewhere. Societies are increasingly using biomedical advances to control births and achieve the particular sex of a child that is more desirable for that society, in this case males.

With the majority of the segments, perhaps it's true that big, momentous issues are essential to my class, but the smaller day-to-day aspects of global lifestyles are essential to understanding the big picture and commonality of humankind.

In understanding commonality in segments 3.52 and others I touch on the topics of children, war orphans, and child labor.

In choosing these segments I advance the idea to students that children are one of the world's most valuable resources and that many societies, including the U.S., fail to make sure children get what they need.

Many of my advanced-level students also don't realize and are shown, that in the United States, child labor was at it peak in the 1890s.

In the cities, it was common for children under 12 to work long hours. In those days, like our times, many children were driven by the poverty of their families because they may have been immigrants or the destitute.

In our looking at immigration on a global scale, students realize that in many countries parents of first-generation immigrants themselves were only a step or two above slave labor – and still are.

In Ellis Island, segment 1.20 , Immigrant Odyssey segment 3.48 and in 4.61 Dominican Smugglers,
a look back at the turn-of -the century, gave my students a valuable perspective on how people lived, while also providing a way to glimpse the future of global immigration trends with all its advantages and disadvantages, all its pressing questions.

In segment 4.67 on China: Environment students are presented with an almost textbook case of how different systems and variables of a problem effect one another.

Students are required to analyze and evaluate how human, technological, and geographical factors affect individuals, groups, and societies.
Students usually determined through the segments and readings that China may soon see a major environmental catastrophe.
Environmental pressures on China include sharp population growth, resource depletion (such as timber) and environmental deterioration as you saw in the video clip. In viewing the segments and readings on China, my class realized that China's rapid economic development may also mean that the Chinese are and will be demanding more and better food ,thus driving up food prices worldwide.

Further, As I teach my students over the process of several units such as the one on China, world population is expected to divide into three tiers:

WORLD 1 comprising advanced nations and the world's middle class living in prosperity similar to Germany, the United States and Japan.
WORLD 2 , a vast range of people living comfortably but not extravagantly and,
WORLD 3, at the bottom people living in destitution.

A CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING THE VIDEO SEGMENTS.
Let's now consider a checklist for selecting the video segments. Its in your handout titled *Approaches for Selecting Materials and Video Segments.*

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This checklist is a sampling of the random-abstract, inner dialogue that I have with myself in the process of watching and finally selecting the segments, and then writing the materials for to use in class. It is by no means complete.

When it comes to CNN, 99% of the time you're dealing with polished, well organized and interesting reports. It's often from other sources that I have problems.

Of course, I want to show my students video segments that are structurally sound and interesting. One reason for rejecting a video segment might be because it is a poorly designed Delphi survey often dressed up and made to look credible.

That particular segment may also neglect or downplay fringe ideas, which are often the most interesting things about an issue. And worse still, the segment lacks visual imagination and is boring, boring, boring to watch.

Let me now touch on a few of the questions that involve the segments; for example question 4: What is the time frame?

When I start to hear far too many vague and imprecise projections about the future, such as "in the next few decades", "over the next generation," or " in the future", I might reject that particular segment and not use it with students.

In addition, specific dates, whenever possible, such as July 1, 1997 in "Hong Kong Charm Offensive", helps make the future – which can be a very fuzzy and abstract concept to my students more concrete.

But on the other hand, students must also learn not to take the dates too literally. They are meant as approximations rather than guarantees.

On question 7: To what extent do you think the materials/segments will interest students?

I would like to add that even a poorly designed segment is not a waste of time if it has told students a few interesting things. Coming away with one solid, new idea is still time well spent, and besides, most of the segments are a short 3-5 minutes and won't take up much class time.

The segments I save are the ones I think will stimulate the student's thinking ,sparks new insights into their background knowledge, and lead to subsequent action in the classroom. A good segment nudges them a little to clarify their thinking, and finally modify previously held beliefs.

An important question is number 11 and rating the overall difficulty level of the news story; keep in mind these three three criteria:

first consider the number of difficult words found in relation to the length of the story,

secondly, the complexity of the subject and all its factors (are there too many?),

and thirdly, attempts at clarification and repetition of the news terms within the context of the story. Repetition is vital.

Usually, journalists and reporters assume viewers have prior knowledge or extensive vocabularies or "news appropriate" vocabulary. My students don't always know or have this extensive vocabulary.

Perhaps the most important questions I ask myself are the last two , 24 and 25 on keeping the lessons teachable and well received by the students. Keeping the lessons teachable is the real challenge.

Let's take problem-solving briefly as an example. If the word "problem" in problem solving is taken by students to mean any situation in which there is room for improvement, then most advanced students easily recognize that there is always room for improvement in solving large-scale problems such as global violent crime, water pollution, and so forth. And as your handout shows, there is no shortage of problems.

Types of problems students encounter on in my class might include:

Substantive Problems:

Substantive problems are the stuff of newspaper headlines. They include population explosion, energy shortages, third world countries, human rights, and the arms race, to name a few.

Students may judge and argue the relative importance of these problems, but few of my students would argue, that they are insignificant or unworthy of investigation in the classroom.

Procedural Problems:

My class might also include Procedural Problems:

Procedural problems focus on who will act? Who should be consulted? What should be done? While my students readily admit that the gap between rich and poor nations is a serious issue, or that young 15 year old girls should not be married off, there is little agreement between my students regarding how to solve the problem or even who should solve it, or can solve it.

In Conceptual Problems:

The way any issue is perceived – or whether it is recognized at all – depends on a student's capacity to conceptualize it.

Consider the way the population problem is conceptualized. How we all conceive a problem makes a difference. The American position on high birth rates, strong birth control measures, is very different from how third world countries perceive the problem.

With Value Problems:

Not only is it important to possess clear and realistic conceptions; the values students hold dear also make a difference to the class.

In finding out what they value through various issues, or values clarification (as it was called in the 70s), students become more comfortable with a global perspective.

Brainstorming:

Lets now look at brainstorming.

Brainstorming, as I will show during questions and answers is only a start. Brainstorming is attractive to students because generating lots of new ideas without concern for value is easy and fun.

However, this approach by itself, is often not adequate for realistic and effective solutions to more challenging global problems. In the speaking assignments, my push is to integrate problem solving with judgmental thinking.

They must develop an opinion and they must develop choices and not waffle, because inevitably in a university setting like Cornell, students must decide on such things as: what and whom to believe, what and what not to watch and listen to, what is acceptable or unacceptable information, and even what they think is right or wrong in the area of human rights.

In assignments in which students must take positions, a commonly used teaching technique is to for students to begin with combining ideas. But again, combining ideas alone does not necessarily lead in the direction of a better idea.

The more useful and effective assignments require students to combine two ideas in a way that incorporates the advantages of both ideas without also incorporating their disadvantages.

This focus on advantages and disadvantages incorporates judgment into the generation of new ideas. Judgment should not be an afterthought in the process and goals of the lessons you write. Whether we intend to or not, as teachers, we always teach value lessons and the making of judgments, conclusions, and inferences.

Every day in universities like Cornell, students are given cases or readings and then directed by instructors to focus on the specific issues and make clear decisions and then defend those decisions.

Along with judgment, teaching students to refine new ideas is another important creative problem solving skill.

Refinement is a necessary tool because ideas virtually always arrive in a flawed state from students. Sometimes the flawed idea is refined quickly after its arrival and it can seem that it arrived in a ready-to-use form But this is usually rare with students and usually happens only for simpler issues that require simpler solutions. They need time.

And perhaps my biggest mistake in the lessons on global issues has been in not giving students enough time for more spontaneous exchanges to arise, for the thinking, evaluating and decision-making processes, for the things they have to say, want to say, and didn't know they wanted to say.

For more complex global issues and problems, time and effort are needed by advanced students to refine ideas into feasible or least somewhat believable solutions and lesson outcomes.

I've got to admit, that teaching students to come up solutions is not easy. What many students call solutions typically are not solutions.

Instead, they are usually statements about: the cause of the problem, what should be stopped, who is to blame, and how to shift a burden or responsibility from one group to another . In other words, they come up with non-solutions. (OHP)

Another suggestion I have for you in teaching global issues and keeping your sanity is this. Let me warn you ,that a global issues class and some of the emotionally charged topics can quickly become depressing for your students to work with.

You've go to be a spin doctor to survive some of the emotionally charged issues . You've got to go on regular newsfast and stop watching the news. too. You can apply one of the simplest tools of problem solving - converting a negatively stated goal and spinning it into a positively stated one.

One of the most effective and productive ways to attempt problem-solving and finding solutions is by intentionally putting a positive spin on the issue and your materials whenever possible and realistic.

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To conclude there today,

One of my on-going aims is to provide students with sophisticated intellectual tasks. Perhaps, learning advanced critical thinking skills requires extra effort on the part of the students, but they are also rewarded with the less-well known problem solving skills of recognizing dimensions and expanding outlines of alternatives and options.

Remember, students' solutions should include refinement and the integration of judgment and the important element of ample time.

I try to put and keep my lessons in the framework of my students' world and needs, and use relevant and real-world examples every chance I get. I also try to appeal to and never forget the ambitions and goals they have for succeeding outside of my classroom tomorrow.

As I said earlier, some of my students are at Cornell to get a piece of the global pie and they desperately want to and are required to improve their English skills before undergraduate or graduate school.

And improvement to me happens to be the only reasonable goal for my own performance and the performance of my students. Thank you.

HANDOUTS

Human problems have proliferated at an accelerating rate in the twentieth century, so the late 1990s and early twenty-first century will likely be the most worry-filled times that the human race has ever experienced. Never before have humans had so many problems to worry about. But having worries is not really a bad thing: The growing list of worries is a sign of progress. As we learn more about how the world works and makes improvements in living conditions, we discover more things to be concerned about. And there's another reason for not despairing: For every problem the world faces, there are many potential solutions.

INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 2.31, 3.40, 4.63)*

- ***Nuclear Proliferation:***
  Slowly but steadily, more nations are acquiring the capability of making atomic weapons, and some may one day decide to use them in military adventures. The international community has found no way to halt the spread of these deadly weapons; in fact, preventing proliferation seems more difficult that ever. The basic method of manufacturing atomic devices is now widely known.

- ***Terrorism:***
  Many groups have discovered that they can get what they want through bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings. Experts expect that terrorism will increase in the years ahead despite tightening security measures.

- ***Loss of cultures:***
  Modern communications have increased pressures for common standards and a common language through the world. The metric unit has steadily replaced local units of measure, and English has become increasingly dominant as the world language. But the move toward standardization is causing a significant loss of cultural richness and even political disturbances.

- ***Ownership of the oceans:***
Nations have been extending their claims to ocean areas off their shores. If the current trend continues, the coastal nations will eventually have the oceans divided up among themselves. Traditionally, maritime nations have maintained a "freedom-of-the-seas" principle, which means that anyone can use the seas to sail across or to appropriate whatever fish or other resources that many be found. Conflict over the ownership of ocean resources promise to become increasingly sharp.

THE FRAGILE ECONOMY *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.1, 1.15, 2.27, 3.47, 4.68)*

- ***Disorder in financial markets:***
Billions of dollars, yen, and deutsche marks race back and forth across national frontiers beyond the control of central banks. A sudden shift in the delicately balanced system could trigger an international economic collapse. The stock market crash of October 19, 1987 barely missed bringing down the U.S. banking system, which might have caused so much damage that a world depression would have resulted.

- ***Trade policy:***
Trade frictions have become increasingly serious in recent years, aggravated by the use of trade policies to punish or reward other nations for political purposes.

- ***The distribution of wealth:***
Living standards have risen greatly during the twentieth century, wealth remains unequally distributed , both among individuals and nations. Attempts to reduce the disparities have sometimes had perverse results: Taking from one person to give to another may reduce the incentives of both to produce additional wealth; money taken from poor people in rich countries has sometimes gone to rich people in poor countries.

- ***Transnational corporations, foreign ownership of real estate, and other assets:***
Nations worry when foreign citizens and entities buy up their economic assets. Similar to colonialism, future profits will not flow to the nations' citizens but to foreigners; worse, a nation may lose control of its destiny as important decisions are made abroad.

GROWING POLLUTION *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.4, 1.18, 2.24, 3.57, 4.62, 4.75)*

- ***Air pollution:***
Motor vehicles and factories pour smoke and noxious gases into the atmosphere. These pollutants cause breathing difficulties and other health problems for millions of people and cause serious illnesses and deaths. The pollutants also damage equipment, ruin crops, and coat buildings and outside structures with damaging grime. Despite widespread concern in recent years, air quality worldwide continues to decline.

- ***Water pollution:***
Rain washed soil, fertilizer, insecticides, and other pollutants into rivers, while factories and cities are adding sewage and chemicals. Airborn dust and chemicals also fall into lakes, killing fish and other wildlife.

- ***Depletion of the ozone layer:***
The upper atmosphere of the earth contains a region where the gas ozone acts as a shield to protect the planet from the sun's deadly ultraviolet radiation. The ozone layer has been weakened by the release of chlorofluorocarbon gases, which are used in refrigerants and as propellants in spray cans. As the ozone layer weakens, more people will succumb to the effects of ultraviolet radiation, which includes skin cancer and blindness. In addition, many food crops such as wheat, rice, and potatoes will be harmed.

- ***The greenhouse effect:***
The buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere (due to the burning of coal and other factors) may cause melting at the North and South Poles, flooding coastal areas around the world.

- ***Noise pollution:***
The noise level has risen steadily in the twentieth century, increasing both stress and hearing loss in individuals. Cities and suburbs seem to become ever noisier with pneumatic drills, lawnmowers, motorcycles, boom boxes, and other noisy equipment. Furthermore, eco-tourism is bringing with it a great deal of noise in areas that were once quiet sanctuaries for wildlife, such as in Zimbabwe.

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- ***Solid-waste problems:***
Many cities worldwide are running out of space in nearby landfills and are searching for places to dump their garbage. In some cases, barges laden with garbage have wandered from port to port seeking permission to dump their loads.

- ***Oceans spills:***
Oil spills from tankers, rivers of garbage, sewage, and chemicals, and the dumping of garbage at sea are killing sea life, coral reefs, and littering or damaging large areas of beach and ocean.

THE DRUG CRISIS *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.16, 1.22, 1.23, 3.58, 4.66)*

- ***Narcotics:***
Controlling cocaine and other narcotics has emerged recently as a top concern of American people. Halting the drug trade, now that it has become pervasive, will likely require very stern and costly measures. Some countries such as Malaysia nad Singapore now are imposing the death penalty on drug dealers. To avoid getting caught, U.S. drug dealers increasingly use children as drug handlers, a practice that introduces a new generation into the narcotics system.

- ***Crime:***
Addicts commit crimes to support their habits. Powerful dealers pay off officials to stay in business, thereby corrupting government even at high levels. In Columbia, officials who threaten the drug trade are assassinated, and similar violence is entering other nations.

DISAPPEARING RESOURCES *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.4, 3.42, 3.57, 4.67, 4.75)*

- ***Energy shortages:***
Many sources of petroleum, coal, and natural gas have been largely exhausted, causing rises in energy cost and uncertainty about future supplies. Alternative sources of energy – such as wind and solar power– exist, but methods of exploiting them currently fall far short of meeting world needs.

- ***Vanishing species, loss of biodiversity:***
Thousands of animals and plant species are currently disappearing or will disappear in the next few decades, mainly due to the destruction of their habitats. Many of these plants and animals have unique features that could make them valuable for human use as medicines, foods, and other purposes.
- ***Declining cropland:***
Overcropping, urbanization, and other factors are causing a worldwide loss of farmland on which food could be grown. Land abuse causes vast quantities of precious topsoil to wash away with every rain. The long-term result may be rising food costs that may deprive poor people of an adequate diet.

- ***Spreading deserts:***
Overgrazing by farm animals and the chopping down of trees and bushes for firewood have turned vast areas of Africa into desert. As deserts spread, people starve or become wards of the international community.
- ***Water shortages and quality:***
In many parts of the world, water supplies are shrinking due to overuse. In the western United States, for example, the water table is falling, so that wells are running dry, forcing farmers to give up their farms. City dwellers face skyrocketing water bills, and authorities must take emergency measures periodically to conserve supplies for essential uses.

- ***Forest destruction:***
Around the world, timber companies are cutting down forests faster than new trees can grow. In South America, forest are being cut and burned to raise cattle and coca. In Europe and North America, forests are dying for reasons that are still not completely clear, but experts believe the main cause is air pollution (acid rain).

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST POVERTY *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 3.42, 3.50, 3.52)*

- ***Destitution:***
Even wealthy nations have people who are not merely poor but destitute – lacking the basic essentials needed to sustain life. In some countries, most people are destitute or nearly so. Reducing this problem will be a major issue of the twenty-first century.

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- ***Starvation:***
Death by starvation is no longer rare, but lack of adequate nourishment causes millions to become so weak they succumb to diseases. Inadequate nutrition also leads to stunted physical and mental growth among children, a high rate of illness, and shortened life-spans.

- ***Homelessness:***
Millions in wealthy as well as poor nations have no home of their own. They may sleep on the streets, in automobiles, in abandoned packing boxes, or even in caves. The causes of homelessness include loss of income, mental illness, alienation from family, and the poverty of the community.

- ***Unemployment:***
The educational requirements for jobs have risen steadily in recent years, but many workers have lagged behind in acquiring new skills and find themselves unemployable or nearly so. other workers become unemployed due to economic recessions or factory closings attributed to automation or imported goods. To prevent hardship, governments provide benefits to unemployed people , but sometimes the benefits reduce the incentive of the unemployed to take available low-wage jobs, thereby creating a class of permanently unemployed people.

- ***Reforming education:***
Despite rising expenditures for education, millions of young people leave schools without the basic skills required to function effectively in modern society. Worldwide, there is little agreement on just what needs to be done to improve education.

CRIME AND LAWLESSNESS *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.16, 3.58, 4.66)*

- ***Reducing crime:***
Social thinkers once believed that education and jobs would wipe out crime. But the crime rate has risen in the face of the biggest outlays ever made to help people become better educated and escape from poverty. What *really* causes crime, and can those causes be addressed so people's lives and property are safe?

- ***Use of punishment:***
Modern societies have become extremely reluctant to use severe punishment as a means of reducing crime. Torture has been supposedly outlawed; capital punishment is rarely carried out; long jail sentences are rarely served if imposed. Is there a link between the decline in harsh punishment and the rise in crime? During the twenty-first century, people will struggle with the question of whether penalties need to be increased and whether new types of penalties may help protect the community from criminals.

- ***Intellectual property:***
It often costs millions of dollars to produce a movie, but films can be copied very cheaply and sold without any payment to the creators. Similar copying problems affect musicians, computer programmers, authors and others. As can be seen with the case of China, without better means of safeguarding the rights of producers, it may become increasingly difficult to finance top-quality information products.

- ***Computer security:***
Computer hackers can tap the new electronic information systems and gain confidential information concerning individual businesses, and government agencies. Preventing unauthorized entry into computers by terrorists, for example, will be an increasing concern.

POPULATION PROBLEMS *(i.e., see World View Segments Guide 1.7, 1.21, 3.48, 3.49, 4.61)*

- ***Population growth:***
In many Third World nations , population growth is devastating the natural environment and driving down living standards, yet most nations are doing little to curb births. Halting high birth rates in poor countries will be a major challenge in the decades ahead.

- ***Birth dearth:***
Some advanced nations now have negative population growth (except for immigration). In the United States and a number of European countries, native born women in their child-bearing years are not having enough children to replace themselves. The low birth rates, especially among highly educated women, have begun to concern a number of scholars.

- ***Migration:***
People moving from one region or country to another can pose problems both for the countries they leave and the countries they enter. The countries they leave may experience a "brain drain" as the brightest and most energetic people depart for better opportunities elsewhere.

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At the same time, the recipient countries face problems assimilating newcomers who do not speak the language of the country or follow its customs.

- ***Deadly demographics:***
Migration and differentials in birth rates often change the demographic makeup of a nation because the percentage of people belonging to one ethnic group or religion will rise while that of another declines. Such a change may upset the political balance in a nation and even lead to civil war, ethnic cleansing, because a group with a growing percentage of the population will begin demanding changes in long-established practices – wider use of its language, more benefits for its religion, etc. – and resistance to such changes bring bloodshed.

- ***Extending the human life-span:***
If current research on aging proves successful, the human life-span may be lengthened far beyond the 70 to 90 years that is considered normal today. Some people alive today may conceivably live to be quite old. but if it becomes possible to extend life-spans dramatically, innumerable new problems will emerge: For example, what will happen to pension funds if people retire in their sixties but then live on for many decades drawing benefits? Modern medicine's spectacular results in curing sick people are producing equally spectacular costs.

NOTE: This list could be extended indefinitely. Everyone should be able to think of problems to add – the control of chemical and biological weapons, AIDS, the Third World debt crisis, culture and values, etc., etc. No claim is made that the problems selected for the list are the most critical. This list is simply aimed at bringing together a sampling of world problems so that they can be viewed synoptically.

Approaches for Selecting Materials/Video Segments: Possible Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Who is the author of the video segment? What are the credentials or reputation of the author of the segment?

2. What is the method? News story or interview? Who are the interviewees, and what institutions do they represent? Do they have a strong bias (which is actually quite useful for the sake of discussion and argument)? Are the interviewees *advocates, enthusiasts,* or *opponents*?

3. What are the assumptions? What are the primary assumptions and tone -- the underlying beliefs and attitudes that influence the tone of the segment? Are they stated outrightly or implicitly?

4. What is the time frame for the issues they are discussing in the segment? Is a specific time frame given, or can it at least be clearly discerned?

5. How far reaching are the predictions and forecasts that are made in the segment? The segments in which the predictions and chronological order are *short-term,* rather than *long-term* are not only more accurate, but more manageable for students .

6. How complex are the systems and interrelationships that students will be required to understand ? Can they understand the group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole that surrounds a particular global issue?
Most importantly, do the segments deal with *simpler* rather than *more complex* systems and phenomena? Are there too many subtly interacting factors that are often more difficult for the students to grasp?

7. To what extent do you think the materials and segments will interest students and relate to their personal lives? Will the materials and segments engage the passive learner and allow you to implement specific approaches to that end?

8. To what extent do the segment and materials persuade, influence or stimulate student thinking? If the lessons don't succeed the first time you try them, how easy are they to remodify for your specific students and pedagogical goals? As a follow-up, how do you determine if you lesson modifications resulted in the intended learning?

9. To what extent does the title give an indication of the content of the video segment? Giving a title to a video segment after students watch it is excellent activity for student to do. The titles on my video guides are minimal for this reason.

10. What are the visual aspects of the segment like? Do they help, hinder or distract from the contents? Does the segment offer attractive and meaningful graphs, charts, and outlines that visually reinforce its contents? Are there images that are too graphic?

11. How do you rate the overall difficulty level of the news story? How much explaining are you going to have to do to launch the unit and introduce the activities that revolve around the segment? How will this effect the strategies that are required of your students that don't have this extensive vocabulary? In other words, how much do speakers imply and how much is the language they use connotative versus denotative?

12. To what extent do the materials and segments emphasize that there are basic needs, concerns, activities , and rights common to humanity (i.e., segments 4.65, 3.59)?

13. To what extent do the materials and segments encourage students to imagine what it would be like to live the life of persons in foreign cultures (i.e., segments 3.44, 2.36)?

14. To what extent do the materials and segments develop understanding of concepts such as *progress, change, growth, system,* and *global interdependence,* just to name a few terms (i.e., segment 4.79)?

15. To what extent do the materials and segments build awareness of current trends and developments that are affecting the world as a whole now and in the near future?

16. To what extent do the materials and segments facilitate the analysis of problems such as *overpopulation, pollution, poverty, racism,* and *war* (i.e., segments 1.3, 3.56)?

17. To what extent do the materials and segments foster an understanding of how humans organizations such as governments, activists groups, churches, and transnational corporations interact globally (i.e., segments 1.19, 3.60)?

18. To what extent do the materials and segments give recognition to the fact that the world's wealth is unequally distributed (i.e., segment 4.68)?

19. To what extent do the materials and segments give recognition to the fact that the world's resources are finite and limited and often collide with progress (i.e., segment 3.57, 4.62)?

20. To what extent do the materials and segments help students to make comparisons and look for interrelationships across cultures, nations, or subgroups of societies?

21. To what extent do the materials and segments encourage student speculating, forecasting, scenario writing, and other ways of estimating how the world may be in the future?

22. What is the length of the segment? Two to five minutes is an optimal length. A shorter length allows the segment to be seen several times if necessary in class without becoming tiresome to both you and the students.

23. If transcripts for the segment are unavailable, would you still be able to use, explain, present the video segment effectively to the students? What classroom environment or organizational factors might affect the outcome both positively and negatively of the lesson?

24. How easily do the materials and segments lend themselves in your preparing of questions? In your analysis of the discourse are you going to be able to write questions other than the usual Who, What, When, Where, and Why (although this is still very useful)?
Similarly, does the segment lend itself to more advance thinking; skills to would include: making judgments; understanding the main idea; understanding the characters and their attitudes; drawing conclusions; recognizing tone; understanding significant details; understanding vocabulary; drawing conclusions and making inferences, and so forth?

25. To what extent are the materials and video segments generally teachable and learnable? Do they lend themselves to brainstorming, problem-solving , role-elaboration, written or performed portfolio assignments, collaborative work , scenario writing and other assignments both short and extended, without an inordinate amount work and preparation on your part?

Sample Questions for Writing Global Issue Units

1. Read the following facts from the news story transcripts. What was the RESULT of each of these facts?
2. Read the following facts from the news story. What is the CAUSE of each fact ?
3. Tell the CAUSE of each of the following facts from the story o:
4. Tell the RESULT of each of the following facts from the story:
5. Read the following facts from the story. Tell the CAUSE of each fact. Tell which facts you think were the result of coincidence.
6. Which of the following statements best expresses the theme or lesson of this story? Be ready to explain why the other statements are not as good. Then tell which statements you generally agree with and which ones you disagree with.
7. Read the following facts from the news story and tell TWO RESULTS of each fact:
8. INFERENCE: The news story doesn't say exactly whether or not the following statements are true.
   What do you think? Give reasons for your opinions.
9. INFERENCE: The story doesn't tell us if the following statements are really true or not.
   What do you think? Be ready to give your reasons.
10. Do you agree with the judges decision in this case? Give your reasons.
11. The story doesn't specifically tell us whether the following statements are true or false. What do you think? Give your reasons. Which statements require more information before you can decide if they are true /false?
12. What is your opinion of _____ who _____? Talk about some of the advantages and disadvantages that the video doesn't mention. Would you ever consider being _____?
    1. Make a list of all the ways that all _____ were similar.
    2. Make a list of the ways that all _____ were not similar.

13. Think about the lists of similarities and differences that you have just made. What additional information would you need to know before you could say whether these similarities and differences were caused by heredity, environment, or coincidence?
14. Describe the sequence of steps necessary in the normal process of_____:
    1. _____.
    2. _____
    3. _____
    4. _____
    5. _____
15. Describe the sequence of things that happen to/at _____:
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
16. According to the _____ committee's report, what was wrong with each of the following. . . ?
17. What is the principal kind of support _____ uses to establish her claim that _____. Is it convincing? Why or why not?
18. List some of the differences in the treatment of male and female children. How can they/this be explained?
19. _____ points out that "_____." Discuss some of the changes and their causes.
20. Choose the following stereotypical ideas and argue that it is true or false or partly both (as you saw in PC) Discuss the reasons for the existence of stereotypes.
    a. Jocks are stupid.
    b. TV is justly called "the boob tube"
    c. Beauty contests are degrading to women
    d. Teaching English can drive a person crazy.
21. Explain the court ruling that prompted this story.
22. Where does the author of the story/newscast reveal the purpose of his proposal?
23. Defend or attack the principal of _____
24. What are some of the assumptions underlying _____?
25. Is _____wrong?
26. What are the principle points of disagreement between ____ and ____? Are there also points of agreement.
27. What are the main obstacles to the establishment of policies that can stop or reverse global warming and other threats to the environment? Do some speakers in this video segment express optimism about the future. If so, what is the basis of their optimism.
28. Can your make up your mind about the severity of _____ from watching this video segment? Is there other information you would want to have? From watching the video on smoking, Is there evidence that experts might be influenced by political doctrines or ideology?

Presenting Global Issues to Advanced Learners

TESOL Orlando Speech, 1997 - Samuel Vann, Cornell University

RESOURCES FOR THE CLASS

Recommended text for the class:

World Access: The Handbook for Citizens of the World, by Kathryn and Ross Petras Published by Fireside Books, Simon and Schuster - ISBN 0-684-81016-6

For subscribing to CNN Newsroom/Worldview television program:

Turner Educational Services at (800) 344-6219

Recommended CD-ROMS:

The following contain a "gold mine" of articles, illustrations, animations, photographs, movies on global topics.
***THE GUINESS ENCYCLOPEDIA*- Wayzata Technology** - 800-735-7321
INFOPEDIA: The Ultimate Multimedia Encyclopedia and Reference Library - Future Vision Multimedia
OUR TIMES: Multimedia Encyclopedia of the 20th Century- Vicarious - (415)-610-8300
HISTORY OF THE WORLD: The Essential Multimedia Reference Guide to World History - DK Multimedia (800) DKMM-575

Additional Reading:

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Oxford University Press. 1986

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Durham: Duke University Press 1986.

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Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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Bethesda, MD: Sisterhood is Global Institute, 1996

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New York: Oxford University Press

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Berlin; New York; Springer, c 1996

Turpin, Jennifer, Kurtz, Lester R., editors. The Web of Violence: From Interpersonal to Global.
Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997

U.N. Staff., Global Outlook 2000: An Economic, Social, and Environmental Perspective.
New York: United Nations Publications. 1990.